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U.S. Department of the Interior

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Shenandoah National Park News Release

For Immediate Release – March 21, 2005

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Shenandoah National Park Plans Prescribed Burns

Shenandoah National Park Acting Superintendent Trish Kicklighter announced today that, weather permitting, the National Park Service will initiate several prescribed burns in Shenandoah National Park this year. Due to the uncertainty of the weather, it is not possible to predict the exact dates.

Prescribed fires are fires ignited on purpose by managers under a pre-determined set of conditions, called a prescription, in order to accomplish specific resource management objectives. The prescription includes weather, fuel moisture, and resource availability parameters. The following burns are planned for this year:

- **Big Meadows.** Portions of Big Meadows, the open area across from Byrd Visitor Center, are burned each year. In March or April, approximately 35 acres will be burned in the center of the field for the purpose of maintaining the open vista by preventing encroachment by woody species.
- **Sawmill.** The Sawmill burn unit, near the town of Doods, VA, on Purple Cow Rd. in Augusta County, was burned once before in 1999. The purpose of the burn was to improve the appearance of the area and to reduce the threat of uncontrollable wildland fire by reducing hazardous fuel conditions caused by insects and disease, storm damage, and exotic species. The park will continue this effort by burning the 55-acre unit again in March or April.
- **Vista Maintenance.** As part of an ongoing project, the park will use fire to maintain open vistas by preventing encroachment by woody species at many scenic locations along Skyline Drive. The park will burn vistas near Swift Run, Hogwallow, and Fox Hollow Overlooks in March, April, or May. Additional vistas may be burned if weather conditions, fuel moisture, and resources permit.

The prescribed burns will be interagency projects, with local support, under the guidance and direction of trained and experienced National Park Service personnel.

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